

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-10. (canceled).

11. (currently amended): An ~~installation in which an~~ apparatus which supports a preform, said preform including a supporting core, the apparatus comprising:

- ~~a preform having a supporting core;~~
- a rotation mechanism that rotates said supporting core of the preform about a ~~longitudinal~~ horizontal axis;
- an adjustable support member; and
- a rotatable wheel mounted on said adjustable support member,

wherein said rotatable wheel (1) has a rotational axis which is parallel to said supporting core, (2) is mounted to rotate freely, and (3) includes a tread strip which comes into tangential contact with said preform.

12. (currently amended): The ~~installation~~ apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said adjustable support member is adjustable between a variable active end position in which said rotatable wheel is in contact with said preform, and an inactive end position in which said rotatable wheel is spaced apart from said preform, and said installation further comprises:

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a sensor that measures a preform characteristic indicative of a sag of said preform; and
a servo-controller coupled to said sensor, said servo-controller adjusting said adjustable support member depending on said preform characteristic measured by said sensor.

13. (currently amended): The ~~installation~~ apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a plurality of rotatable wheels in addition to said rotatable wheel having respective associated adjustable support members, said plurality of rotatable wheels being disposed at regular axial intervals and radially to said ~~longitudinal~~ horizontal axis.

14. (currently amended): The ~~installation~~ apparatus according to claim 12, wherein when said adjustable support member assumes said variable active end position, said rotatable wheel is in contact with a bottom of a periphery of said preform.